

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1 and 10 are currently pending in the application. Claims 3, 5-7, 9 and 12-14 stand rejected. Claims 1 and 10 are allowed. Claims 3, 5-7, 9 and 12-14 have been cancelled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 3, 5-7, 9 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pierre et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,300,318 and separately over Koyama et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,855,914. (*See*, Office Action of July 14, 2006, at pages 3 and 4, respectively). Claims 3, 5-7, 9 and 12-14 have been cancelled herein without prejudice or disclaimer, thus obviating the obviousness rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 1 and 10 are allowed. (*Id.* at page 8). Claims 1 and 10 are the only remaining pending claims. Thus, the present application is in condition for allowance.

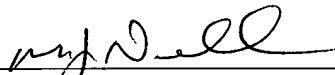
CONCLUSION

If the Examiner has any questions or comments, please contact Thomas J. Siepmann, Ph.D., Registration No 57,374 at the offices of Birch, Stewart, Kolasch & Birch, LLP.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 
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